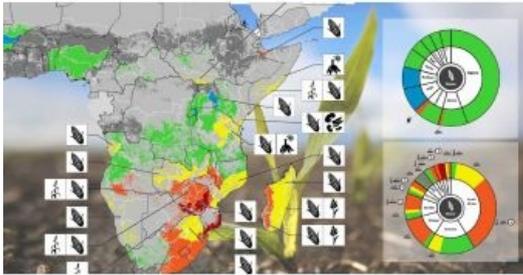


Early Warning Crop Monitor: a New Tool to Fight Food Insecurity



The Group on Earth Observations has announced the launch of the Early Warning Crop Monitor, a new tool to fight food insecurity. The announcement was made during the GEO 36th Executive Meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 8 and 9 March 2016.

Developed by the GEO Global Agricultural Monitoring Initiative (GEOGLAM), initiated by the G-20 Agriculture Ministers, the Early Warning Crop Monitor (EWCM) provides consensus reports on crop conditions in countries at risk of food insecurity in Central and South America, Africa, the Middle East, and Central and East Asia. The March EWCM bulletin reports that countries in Southeast Asia, and even more so in Southern Africa, face severe droughts attributed to the ongoing El Niño.

Crop development

The Early Warning Crop Monitor, together with the [GEOGLAM Crop Monitor](#) for the Agricultural Market Information Service (AMIS), will ultimately monitor crop development in 124 countries, totalling about 94 percent of the world's agricultural area. Both reports synthesise remote sensing data, field observations and environmental modelling conducted by more than 40 international, regional and national organisations. The monthly reports are made available to decision-makers across the food security community and to the commodities markets.

Food and water

GEO's US co-chair, Dr Kathryn Sullivan, administrator of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), stated that concerns over food and water security are rising globally. Ensuring that agricultural industries around the world have access to the best science, data, tools and resources is essential as they work to increase food security and mitigate the effects of droughts and floods. The GEOGLAM Early Warning Crop Monitor provides decision-makers with essential information, gathered from satellites, buoys and other observational tools, to be ready, responsive and resilient against extreme weather and water events.

Executive committee

During its latest meeting, the GEO executive committee also welcomed new participating organisations: European Association of Remote Sensing Companies (EARSC); Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies (JBGIS); Mountain Research Initiative (MRI); and a new Observer, the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF).

In addition to Kathryn Sullivan, the executive committee co-chairs include Hejun Yin, vice-minister, ministry of Science and Technology (China); Rudolf Strohmeier, assistant director-general, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (European Commission); and Philemon Mjwara, director-general, Department of Science and Technology (South Africa).